

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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JOINT EMBASSY/USAID MESSAGE

AID/W FOR PHA/POP AND AA/LA

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SPOP, EC
SUBJECT: USAID/E PHASEOUT AND FAMILY PLANNING ACTIVITIES

1. SUMMARY: FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS IN ECUADOR WERE JUST REACHING THE POINT OF PROVIDING MAJOR RETURNS WHEN THE DECISION WAS MADE TO PHASE OUT USAID/E. IN LIGHT OF GOE AND USG (PHA/POP INTEREST, THE MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT AND AID/W AUTHORIZATION TO COMMENCE CONVERSATIONS WITH GOE RE RENEWING A FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM IN ECUADOR. END SUMMARY

2. ONE OF THE MORE EFFECTIVE AND BROAD-BASED PROGRAMS INITIATED BY USAID/E OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS HAS BEEN THE FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM. USAID/E PIONEERED IN BROADENING THE SCOPE OF FAMILY PLANNING, SUCH AS THE PROJECTS IN COOPERATION WITH THE ECUADOREAN MILITARY, AND THE MALARIA ERADICATION PROGRAM. THE PROGRAM ALSO TOOK EARLY ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES INHERENT IN OTHER SECTOR PROGRAMS AND EXPLOITED THEM TO THE MAXIMUM. AS HAS BEEN THE CASE IN OTHER COUNTRIES, MUCH OF THE EARLY EFFORT IN ECUADOR WAS HAMPERED BY THE NEED TO MAKE OFFICIALS AND THE GOVERNMENT AWARE OF THE NEED FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FAMILY PLANNING. THUS, MANY OF THE PROJECTS WERE JUST REACHING THE POINT OF PROVIDING MAJOR RETURNS WHEN WE ABANDONED THE ENTIRE PROGRAM EARLIER THIS YEAR.

3. AS THE DATE FOR PHASE OUT OF THE AID MISSION DRAWS NEARER, WE HAVE BECOME MORE AWARE OF THE NEGATIVE IMPACT OF THE FAILURE OF THE USG TO HAVE ANY FAMILY PLANNING

EFFORT IN ECUADOR. THE BIRTHRATE, FOR INSTANCE, REMAINS ONE OF THE HIGHEST IN THE WORLD, AT 3.2 PERCENT. THUS, THE COUNTRY TEAM RECOMMENDS THAT THE DEPARTMENT AND AID/W CONSIDER REINSTITUTING SOME TYPE OF FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM IN ECUADOR WHICH WOULD CONTINUE AFTER THE PHASEOUT OF THE AID MISSION. WE ENVISION A PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY ONE LOCAL-HIRE EMPLOYEE WHO WOULD BE SUPERVISED AND MONITORED BY A POPULATION OFFICER IN THE EMBASSY. MANPOWER AND US PRESENCE NEEDS WOULD THUS BE MINIMIZED.

4. WE WISH TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS RECOMMENDATION IN NO WAY IS AN ATTEMPT TO PROLONG THE LIFE OF THE USAID/E MISSION, NOR A PRELUDE TO OTHER, SMILAR REQUESTS. OUR MODEL IN MAKING THIS REQUEST IS THE NARCOTICS PROGRAM, IN WHICH AID PARTICIPATION WILL CONTINUE AFTER THE PHASEOUT OF THE MISSION. THAT PROGRAM IS BEING RETAINED BECAUSE IT IS DEEMED OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE AND BECAUSE IT BENEFITS THE US DIRECTLY, AS WELL AS ASSISTING ECUADOR. FAMILY PLANNING CAN BE QUALIFED IN THE SAME MANNER: POPULATION CONTROL IS A PRIMARY GOAL OF THE USG AND BENEFITS THE US IN A VERY REAL AND DIRECT WAY. THE SAME CRITERIA WHICH CONVINCED THE USG TO CONTINUE AID'S NARCOTICS INPUT IN ECUADOR SHOULD SERVE TO JUSTIFY FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF OUR RECOMMENDATION RE FAMILY PLANNING.

5. WE WISH TO EMPHASIZE THAT THE GOE MINISTER OF HEALTH EXPRESSED A DEEP REGRET THAT THE USAID WAS PHASING OUT OF FAMILY PLANNING. IN FACT, HE REQUESTED THAT OUR POPULATION OFFICER BE KEPT IN QUITO AS HIS PERSONAL ADVISOR EVEN IF NO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROGRAM FUNDS WERE MADE AVAILABLE.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT AID/W AND THE DEPARTMENT CONCUR IN OUR REQUEST THAT WE COMMENCE CONVERSATION WITH THE GOE RE THE ADVISABILITY OF RENEWING A FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM IN ECUADOR. BLOOMFIELD

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